

# News Release



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## Eastshore State Park Phase II Construction Begins

## **Restoration of Environment Now Set; Virginia Street Extension to Close Temporarily**

BERKELEY -- Pedestrians, dog walkers and cyclists who use the Virginia Street Extension are asked to use an alternate route over the next few months due to a park construction project.

However, park officials say the end result will open up a park with improved public access, environmental restoration and a more natural and beautiful shoreline area.

The construction is part of the Berkeley Meadow Habitat Restoration project and is expected to begin December 10. It will result in the temporary closure of the Virginia Street Extension, a popular pedestrian access that goes from the Bay Trail to Berkeley's Cesar Chavez Park.

Officials said the Extension will be closed until construction is complete, which is expected to be sometime in early March 2005. The closure will extend from the Virginia Street Extension frontage road to the Marina Boulevard. State officials suggested pedestrians use University Avenue to Marina Boulevard as an alternate route to Cesar Chavez Park.

The construction will include the removal of existing broken asphalt surfacing and the return of more traditional trails, and the installation of interpretive exhibits and fencing.

The project is a partnership between State Parks and the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD), the largest urban park district in the nation.

Eastshore State Park extends 8.5 miles along the East Bay shoreline from the Bay Bridge to Richmond. It includes 2,262 acres of uplands and tidelands along the waterfronts of Oakland, Emeryville, Berkeley, Albany and Richmond. The state owns the majority of

Eastshore State Park and partners with EBRPD to manage the site. The San Francisco Bay Trail will link the entire park when the project is completed.

State Parks and EBRPD plan to enhance and restore a number of ecosystems and habitat types throughout the park. The Berkeley Meadow Habitat Restoration is one such project that will improve public access and ecological habitats in the Berkeley Meadow.

The tidelands comprise rich tidal marshes, sub tidal areas and mudflats that extend bayward from the shoreline, including the Emeryville Crescent, Albany Mudflat and Hoffman Marsh. Most of the existing upland area is the result of fill placed in the Bay west of the historic shoreline. The shoreline reflects the unique influences of both natural systems and human intervention.

As described in the Eastshore State Park General Plan, trails will be provided through and around the Meadow. However, no dogs will be allowed on the interior trails due to the sensitive wildlife habitat. Off-leash dog access is permitted at Cesar Chavez Park and at Point Isabel Regional Shoreline.

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